

Canada Debuts Photographic Art Series



and over, the same names and the same titles would arise from conversations and lists. That told me we were truly coming to some consensus on the best of the best." Of this select group of photographs, seven appear on this issue's five Permanent domestic rate stamps, one on the U.S. stamp, and one on

On March 22, Canada Post issued a set of Canadian Photography stamps, which will take the place of the annual Art Canada issue, and will look at the last century and a half of photography by Canadian photographers.

Stamp Design Manager Alain Leduc, stated "I see this series as a continuation of Art Canada—these are masters of the art of photography—but we've changed and freshened up the design and the format to better suit the medium."

Even in its early days, Canada offered a wealth of inspiration for photographers. From its scenic beauty to its nascent urban landscapes, from politicians to powerbrokers, from aboriginals to early immigrants, the country's early diversity inspired some of the world's most recognized photographers. From William Notman to Yousuf Karsh, Margaret Watkins to Gabor Szilasi, Canada has been home to photography masters.

The background work for the series began more than two years ago, framed by the challenge of showcasing the best Canadian photography from Confederation to the country's sesquicentennial in 2017. Faced with the massive task of choosing what images would be included, Leduc brought together some of the best minds in the Canadian art photography world to help select images for the series. He looked to curators and photography critics and writers who have spent their careers discovering both new and lost artists. Says Leduc, "Over

the International stamp.

In a move from the more traditional gum-backed pane format used for Art Canada, this photography series was issued in the form of self-adhesive books of ten (two of each of five stamps) for the domestic rate, and separate booklets of six for the U.S. and International rates. Additional photographs—also from the seven photographers whose images were chosen for the stamps—are used on the booklet covers and selvage.

The 2013 issue is the start of a new series. Leduc explained, "Instead of one or two images by a particular photographer each year, we treated the photography we selected as art pieces, combining those choices to produce an annual gallery of the best of the best."

The initial Permanent domestic stamps of the series features work by early photographers Thomas Coffin Doane, Geraldine Moodie and Margaret Watkins, as well as contemporaries Jim Breukelman and Hungarian-born Canadian, Gabor Szilasi.

The work of Arnaud Maggs, known for his 48 views of Yousuf Karsh, graces the International rate stamp, while Rodney Graham's Basement Camera Shop appears on the U.S. rate stamp.

Leduc concluded that in the development of the series, the group rejected typical parameters of Canadian photography, choosing instead the best work of photographers who identified as Canadian, whether by birth or by choice, as well as photographs that were shot within Canada, and those that demonstrated a Canadian vision of the larger world.